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Les suggestions hypnotiques, une lacune dans la loi. F. DELACROIX. Paris, 1887, 47 pp.

The reform for which this magistrate pleads is summed up in the new legal provision he proposes, viz : 1. No one shall practice hypnotism unless he be a duly authorized physician, and be assisted by a second physician especially licensed upon this topic. All public exhibitions of hypnotism, save in schools and laboratories legally chartered, should be forbidden. 2. All infractions of this article shall be punished by imprisonment of from six days to two years, and by a fine of from 16 to 2000 francs, or by one of these alone.

Le magnétisme animal. Dr. F. BOETLY. 2nd ed. 1886, 292 pp.

The author writes in the atmosphere of the Salpêtrière. His book is probably the best presentation of the whole subject in its space, which is much less than that occupied by Binet and Féré. There are slight experimental and critical additions.

Du sommeil provoqué chez les hystériques. Essai d'explication psychologique de ses causes et ses effets. A. ESPINAS. Bordeaux, 1884, 29 pp.

The initial cause of induced sleep in hysterical subjects is the exhaustion of the higher centres by excitation. In normal persons the nervous elements contain a considerable quantity of force *en tension*. In hysterical persons the quantity of this force in each nervous element is small. In the case of normal persons, peripheral excitations which tend to set free the nervous force *en tension* meet with a strong resistance when they reach the higher centres. The higher centres act as centres of arrest by checking the movements which the peripheral excitations would produce if they were permitted to reach the motor centres. In hysterical persons, on the other hand, the excitations which exceed a certain degree of intensity do not meet any resistance from the higher centres in their passage to the ideomotor centres, and therefore these excitations set free the nervous force in the ideomotor centres. Thus because of the small quantity of nervous force, the higher centres are easily exhausted and the peripheral excitations are left unobstructed. The exhaustion of the activity of the centres of ideation causes a diminution, if not a suppression, of all sensorial or cutaneous sensibility, and this in turn produces a diminution or suppression of consciousness. According to Professor Espinas, then, that which makes hysterical individuals subject to hypnotism is the weak condition of the higher centres which are easily exhausted, and which diminishes consciousness according to the degree of exhaustion. C. A. O.

After witnessing the hypnotic exhibitions of Señor Das, at the Spanish court, in January of this year, the *Hann. Cour.* reports that Queen Christine is said to have completely hypnotized a young lady of the court who showed remarkable powers of clairvoyance, if the detailed report can be relied on. After rousing the young lady, the Queen asked Señor Das if the power to excite magnetism resided in all persons, and was told that it slumbered in all who had irresistible power of will and perfect concentration of thought. The Queen then desired to be hypnotized, but although the strongest means were tried for some time, the Queen was not only unaffected, but seemed to

show greater power of will than the professor himself. Two German journals, however, report that the experiment succeeded, but one of them expresses the hope that it did not, on account of the grave consequences that might have befallen the country had the Queen really developed this high degree of suggestibility.

We have above attempted to present to our readers a digest of the chief representative books illustrating the different lines of experiment and observations and the different theoretic standpoints lately developed concerning hypnotism. There are other large works and countless smaller ones, besides all the contents of the *Revue de l'Hypnotisme*, edited by Dr. Edgar Berillon, and a growing number of works of French fiction occupied either chiefly or incidentally with multiplex personality, telepathy, transfer, or other spurious or genuine phenomena of hypnotism. In a future number we hope to publish results of a line of research already long under way in the psychophysic rooms of this university, which we believe shed additional light on one important group of these facts. One moral of all this movement is most obvious and impressive, viz. that physicians cannot study these phenomena with safety to their scientific reputation without more training in modern psychology than even the best medical schools either in France or in our own country now afford. To this we shall recur at length later.

III.—EXPERIMENTAL.

Ueber Holmgren's vermeintlichen Nachweis der Elementarempfindungen des Gesichtssinns. E. HERING. Pflüger's Archiv, Vol. 40, p. 1.

Holmgren is supposed to have proved, by some experiments which he described before the Medical Congress in Copenhagen in 1884, that the Young-Helmholtz theory of color sensation is the correct theory. His plan was to throw a very small and sharp image of a very small hole in a metal plate on the retina. If the diameter of the image is smaller than that of a cone, then white light ought to look red, green or violet according as it falls upon one or another of the cones of a cone triad; if it falls half way between two it ought to look purple, yellow or blue, and only when it hits all three equally would it look white. If only saturated yellow light is allowed to come through the hole it may look red or green, but never violet or white. A white hole ought then to look in general colored, and only occasionally white; that is, provided (1) that the theory is true, (2) that a small enough image can be produced, and (3) that in spite of the constant, rapid, involuntary motions of the eye, the different sensations furnished by the different cones can be distinguished in consciousness. Holmgren succeeded in his experiments with homogeneous yellow light from a spectrum. He was less successful with blue light, and he does not seem to have tried white light. Hering criticises his method and, on repeating his experiments, failed to obtain his results.

Holmgren says that after struggling for some time with the difficulty of producing a sufficiently sharp image on the retina, he hit upon the idea of using a telescope, and that this instrument must hereafter be looked upon as an indispensable aid to all experiments of this sort. Hering says that this is surprising; for producing a